

THE BYZANTINE FAMILY OF KANTAKOUZENOS

Some Addenda and Corrigenda

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FIVE years have now elapsed since the publication (as *Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, XI) of my genealogical and prosopographical study of the Byzantine family of Kantakouzenos. It has been reviewed at greater or lesser length in a variety of learned journals.¹ Its reviewers, to whom I am greatly indebted, have suggested a number of additions and corrections. Lest any of their helpful and valuable suggestions should pass unnoticed, it may be worth while to bring them all together in one place and correlate them with the existing text of the book, so that the prosopography of this particular family can be advanced a little further. In addition, I have on my own account to add to the list one hitherto neglected member of the family.

The numbers in italics and page references in the text of this Note refer to the numbers and pages in the book.

¹ I have taken account of the following reviews: J. W. Barker, in *American Historical Review*, 75 (1969), 99–100; C. M. Brand, in *Speculum*, 45 (1970), 678–80; A. Bryer, in *Classical Review*, 20 (1970), 219–22; C. Capizzi, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 25 (1969), 538–39; J. Gouillard, in *Revue Historique*, 244 (1970), 166–67; Walter K. Hanak, in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 57 (1971–72), 325; R. Janin, in *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, 27 (1969), 538–39; W. E. Kaegi, in *Church History*, 39 (1970), 110–11; A. P. Každan, in *Vizantijskij Vremennik*, 30 (1969), 254–56; V. Laurent, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 65 (1972), 97–99; Y. Lazace, in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, 24 (1969), 181; M. Maclagan, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 21 (1970), 228–29; J. Mossay, in *Le Muséon*, 84 (1971), 562–63; D. I. Polemis, in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 21 (1970), 261–62; N. S. Tanaşoca, in *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes*, 7 (1969), 744–46; G. I. Theocharides, in *Ελληνικά*, 23 (1970), 126–32; P. Wirth, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 210 (1970), 697. There may well be others which I have missed; in which case I apologize to their authors.

No. 3: MANUEL KANTAKOUZENOS

Professor A. P. Každan has rightly observed that I have here confused two different persons of the name of Manuel. Our information about one of them comes from Kinnamos, about the other from Niketas Choniates. The Manuel of Choniates was a soldier who lived about 1179. The Manuel of Kinnamos, a young man blinded during the reign of Manuel I, was the son of John Kantakouzenos (No. 2). Since the narrative of Kinnamos ends at the year 1176, the son of John must have been deprived of his sight by that year. If he had taken part in a battle in 1179 Niketas Choniates would surely have mentioned the fact of his blindness.²

No. 4: JOHN KANTAKOUZENOS, Caesar

I am here indebted to Professor Každan for two observations: (i) that the reference to John's campaign against the Bulgars should be supplemented by citing the full text of Niketas Choniates as edited by J. van Dieten; (ii) that there is no warrant for supposing that John's marriage to Eirene Angelina was disallowed by the Patriarch Loukas Chrysoberges. The synodal decree of 1166, forbidding marriages between partners sharing a seventh degree of affinity, had no connection with the marriage of this John.³

No. 6: ANDRONIKOS KANTAKOUZENOS

It escaped my attention that another (or possibly the same) Andronikos Kanta-

² Každan, "Novye raboty po vizantijskoj prosopografii," *VizVrem*, 30 (1969), 255.

³ *Ibid.*, 256. J. A. J. van Dieten, "Two unpublished fragments of Nicetas Choniates' historical work," *BZ*, 49 (1956), 316.

kouzenos is referred to by Niketas Choniates.⁴ He lived at about the same time (1170–1190), and he was a γαμβρός of the Emperor Isaac II Angelos. In October 1187 he was given a detachment of troops to guard Anchialos during Isaac's campaign against the Bulgars and Cumans in Thrace.⁵

Père V. Laurent records, from unedited material, an Andronikos Kantakouzenos, *sebastos*, who may well be the same person.⁶

No. 9: EIRENE-EUPHROSYNE KOM-
NENE PHILANTHROPENE
KANTAKOUCZENE

The date of the death of this elusive lady is given in the manuscript notice referred to as 8 August 1202. Dr. D. I. Polemis has observed, however, that this date is too early for a member of the Philanthropenos family, and has proposed emending the date to read 1292.⁷ This proposal is surely correct. Eirene-Euphrosyne should therefore be moved further forward in the chronological sequence to be numbered, perhaps, as No. 13a.

Her place as No. 9, however, might now be taken by one member of the Kantakouzenos family of whose existence I had once

been aware but whom, through negligence, I failed to include:

THEODORE KANTAKOUCZENOS
(floruit 1200–1230)

Theodore was a deacon (διάκονος and κληρικός) of the bishopric of Ioannina in the first part of the thirteenth century. His existence is known from the report of a lawsuit brought against him by one of his relatives by marriage and the judgment thereon pronounced by Demetrios Chomatianos in the ecclesiastical court at Ochrida, whither Theodore had taken his case as a plaintiff. Theodore was married to one Anastasia, one of the three daughters of a lady called Maria. The lawsuit concerned entitlement to the property of Maria's first husband, Stanos, half of which had passed to Theodore Kantakouzenos as the dowry of his wife Anastasia. This settlement was disputed twenty-seven years after the event by a female relative of the then deceased Stanos, through her husband, John Kaloudas. The learned Archbishop of Ochrida had no hesitation in pronouncing in favor of Theodore's claim to the property as his hereditary right. Theodore is mentioned again as a deacon of Ioannina in one other document of Chomatianos. Neither document is dated, and the *floruit* of Theodore can only be determined by the dates of Demetrios Chomatianos as archbishop of Ochrida, between 1217 and *circa* 1235. No other member of the Kantakouzenos family is known to have been connected with the city of Ioannina.⁸

⁸ Demetrios Chomatianos, *Opera*, ed. J. B. Pitra, *Analecta Sacra et Classica Spicilegio Solesmensi parata*, VI (Paris-Rome, 1891), chap. LXVI, cols. 289–94; chap. LXXXVII, col. 389. The name Kaloudas (Ἰωάννου τοῦ Καλουδά) could be a variant of Kaloudes; Joannikios Kaloudes was abbot of the Prodomos monastery on Mount Menoikeion in the thirteenth century (A. Guillou, *Les Archives de Saint-Jean-Prodomos sur le Mont Ménécée* [Paris, 1955], 8, 9, 22, 23). Or it might be a corruption of the more familiar name Kaloeidas, some members of whose family are listed by Hélène Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne, etc.," *Travaux et Mémoires*, I (Paris, 1965), 112, 120; H. Hunger, *Johannes Chortasmenos (ca. 1370–ca. 1436/37). Briefe, Gedichte und kleine Schriften* (Vienna, 1969), 119–20.

⁴ Každan, *op. cit.*, 256. Niketas Choniates, Ἐπαναγνωστικὸν εἰς τὸν πατριάρχην, ed. K. N. Sathas, in *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, I (Venice, 1872), 81, lines 13–14; ed. J. A. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, Corpus Font. Hist. Byz., III (Berlin and New York, 1972), 10, lines 16–17; *idem*, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterung zu den Reden und Briefen*, Supplementa Byzantina, 2 (Berlin and New York, 1971), 72–73, 79.

⁵ Cf. C. M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West 1180–1204* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 90–91.

⁶ Laurent, "Familiae Augustae Byzantinae. Les Ducas—Les Cantacuzènes," *BZ*, 65 (1972), 98. Unpublished material available to Laurent also provides the name of one Maria *sebaste* from the beginning of the 12th century, and confirms the fact that Basil Kamateros, cited in 1166 and 1170, was a Kantakouzenos on his mother's side. Cf. the seal published by V. Laurent in *Byzantion*, 6 (1931), 263:

Σφραγὶς σεβαστοῦ Καματηροῦ πατρὸς
Καντακουζηνοῦ μητροῦθεν Βασιλείου.

⁷ D. I. Polemis, *The Doukai. A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography*, University of London Historical Studies, 22 (London, 1968), no. 169, p. 168 note 9; *idem*, in *JES*, 21 (1970), 262.

No. 13: JOHN KOMNENOS KANTAKOUZENOS ANGELOS

The *floruit* of this John can now be set back about two years. In november 1242, styling himself as *pinkernes*, he issued a *gramma* granting exemption from taxation to the monastery of Hieria, in the *katepanikion* of Anea and in the Meander.⁹

No. 15: MARIA PALAIOLOGINA KANTAKOUZENE

Père V. Laurent has observed that the seal of Nikephoros Lachanas published by B. A. Pančenko (referred to on p. 20 note 19) cannot possibly belong to Maria's third husband, Lachanas-Ivajlo, since it dates from the second half of the twelfth century.¹⁰

No. 22: JOHN KANTAKOUZENOS, Emperor

The date of the formal abdication of the Emperor John VI should now be corrected from 10 December to 4 December 1354.¹¹

No. 29: THEODORA KANTAKOUZENE

Laurent contends that Theodora's return to Constantinople after the death of her husband Orchan is certified by a document (of the Patriarch Matthew I, dated June 1400) in F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi*, II, p. 394.¹²

⁹ N. Wilson and J. Darrouzès, "Reste du cartulaire de Hiéra Xérochoraphion," *REB*, 26 (1968), no. 6, pp. 20–21.

¹⁰ Laurent, in *BZ*, 65 (1972), 98. Laurent also corrects the date (given under No. 16, p. 21) of the anti-unionist synod in Blachernai from May to 19–26 April 1283; and on No. 18 (p. 26) he points out that the recipient of Letter no. 158 of Gregory of Cyprus (ed. S. Eustratiades) was not Na Kantakouzene (Mouzalon) (No. 18) but Theodora Palaiologina Kantakouzene Raoulaina (No. 14) (as A. Chatzes had suggested), to whom Gregory addressed not "eighteen" but thirty of his letters.

¹¹ See now A. Failler, "Note sur la chronologie du règne de Jean Cantacuzène," *REB*, 29 (1971), 293–302; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261–1453* (London, 1972), 253, 260.

¹² Laurent, *op. cit.*, 99. The fact that Nikephoros Gregoras erroneously calls Theodora "Maria" (which "on aurait pu signaler") is in fact stated at p. 134 note 1.

This document refers to "the late βασιλῆς ἡ δέσποινα τῆς Ἀνατολῆς κυρά Θεοδοσία μοναχή ἡ Καντακουζηνή." I believe, however, that the lady in question here is not Theodora, the daughter of John VI, but Theodora Komnene Kantakouzene, wife of Alexios III of Trebizond (who died in 1390). The title δέσποινα τῆς Ἀνατολῆς seems more applicable to an empress of Trebizond than to the wife of an emir. See No. 35, p. 144 and note 20. Professor J. Gouillard appears to accept this identification, but expresses a justifiable doubt as to whether the word αὐταδέλφη can mean "a sister in the religious sense," as I had suggested (*ibid.*, note 21). He also rightly points out that, since this Theodora (No. 35) clearly had a sister, her father Nikephoros Kantakouzenos (No. 34) must be credited with *two* daughters.¹³

No. 31: N. KOMNENOS TARCHANEIOTES DOUKAS KANTAKOUZENOS

The temptation to "identify this Kantakouzenos with John Tarchaneiotes, third son of Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes and Maria-Martha, sister of the Emperor Michael VIII" (p. 139) has been shown to be totally resistible by V. Laurent, by D. I. Polemis and by Professor G. I. Theocharides.¹⁴ The fact remains, however, that Manuel Philes gives him the surname of Kantakouzenos. Whether or not he was (as Theocharides says) a Tarchaneiotes on his father's side and a Palaiologos on his mother's side seems mere conjecture. Philes does not accord to him the name of Palaiologos. The matter cannot be resolved without some further evidence about the known connection between the families of Kantakouzenos and Tarchaneiotes, and about the known interest of John VI and his family in the convent of Kyra Martha in Constantinople (see p. 140).

¹³ Gouillard, in *RH*, 244 (1970), 167. It may be added here that the stemma of the family of Helena and John V is incorrect as it appears on p. 138. The Despot Michael Palaiologos was their third son, and the Despot Theodore Palaiologos their fourth son.

¹⁴ Laurent, *op. cit.*, 99; Polemis, in *JEH*, 21 (1970), 262; Theocharides, in *Ἑλληνικά*, 23 (1970), 130.

No. 43: CONSTANTINE KANTAKOUZENOS

The two seals bearing the name of this Constantine, which G. Schlumberger (and also V. Laurent) had dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, should now, it seems be assigned to the end of the twelfth century.¹⁵ This puts Constantine in the same generation as John Kantakouzenos, Caesar (No. 4).

No. 47: MANUEL PHAKRASES KANTAKOUZENOS

Professor H. Hunger has observed that the relief from the walls of Constantinople bearing the name of this Manuel, which I reported as being "now lost," is in fact to be found in the Archaeological Museum at Istanbul (no. 4816).¹⁶

No. 57: THEODORE KANTAKOUZENOS and No. 58: GEORGE KANTAKOUZENOS

Professor Hunger, in his edition of the writings of John Chortasmenos, has persuasively argued that I have here confused two distinct persons:

(i) THEODORE KANTAKOUZENOS, who is described by Demetrios Kydones simply as the φίλος (not the θεῖος) of the Emperor Manuel II. It was this Theodore who signed Andronikos III's daughter's donation to the monastery of Philotheou in 1376, and also the chrysobull of Alexios III of Trebizond for Dionysiou in 1374.¹⁷

(ii) THEODORE PALAIOLOGOS KANTAKOUZENOS, the θεῖος of Manuel II, the recipient of several letters and adulatory poems from John Chortasmenos and imperial ambassador to France and Venice in 1397 and 1398, who died in 1410.

¹⁵ Laurent, *op. cit.*, 98; though cf. *idem*, *Les bulles métriques dans la sigillographie byzantine*, nos. 197, 219, pp. 71, 79 (= *Ἑλληνικά*, 4 [1931], 351, 359). Laurent, *loc. cit.*, prints the legend from another unpublished seal of Constantine Kantakouzenos.

¹⁶ Hunger, *Johannes Chortasmenos*, 103 note 3a.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 105 note 1. N. Oikonomides, *Actes de Dionysiou*, Archives de l'Athos, IV (Paris, 1968), 52–53, who poses the question as to whether the other signatory of the document of Alexios III, Theognostos, metropolitan of Iberia, may be identical with Theodore Kantakouzenos.

Hunger goes on to propose that this latter Theodore Palaiologos Kantakouzenos was very probably a son of Matthew Kantakouzenos and Eirene Palaiologina (No. 24), who were married early in 1341; and that it was he, rather than Demetrios Kantakouzenos *sebastokrator* (No. 50), who was the father of George Palaiologos Kantakouzenos (No. 67) and his two brothers and three sisters, whom Hugues Busac claimed as his ancestors (Nos. 68, 70–73). George (No. 67), who must have been born about 1390, was the known pupil of John Chortasmenos (= No. 58). Later in his life he was in the service of the Despot Constantine Palaiologos in the Peloponnese, and he died between 1456 and 1459. In other words, No. 58 and No. 67 should be conflated, since they refer to the same person. George had nine children, of whom the eldest was Theodore Kantakouzenos (No. 82).

An attractive feature of this chain of genealogical reconstruction is that it provides a grandson and a grandfather with the same first name, which was quite a common pattern in Byzantine families. Theodore Kantakouzenos (No. 82), the son of George Palaiologos Kantakouzenos (No. 67), is seen to be the grandson of Theodore Palaiologos Kantakouzenos (No. 57 [ii]). Such a hypothesis had already been suggested by V. Laurent, as Hunger admits.¹⁸ It is certainly more convincing and sensible than the alternative (which I accepted) of supposing that George (No. 67) and the other grandchildren of Matthew Kantakouzenos were the offspring of Matthew's son Demetrios (No. 50). The chronological and other reasons why this proposal is untenable are clearly set out by Hunger. But it still requires an act of faith to believe that Matthew Kantakouzenos, on whose career and family we are relatively well informed, should have had a third son of the name of Theodore about whose existence the sources make no mention.

I am prepared to admit, therefore, that the missing link between Matthew Kantakouzenos and his grandchildren is *not* his

¹⁸ E. Brayer, P. Lemerle, V. Laurent, "Le Vaticanus Latinus 4789: Histoire et alliances des Cantacuzènes au XIV^e–XV^e siècles," *REB*, 9 (1952), 82.

son Demetrios. The obvious alternative is his other son, the Despot John (*No. 49*), about whom almost nothing is known. It is not impossible that a third son might have been born in the Peloponnese after 1361–1362, when Matthew and his wife Eirene took up residence there. But in default of any certain evidence for his existence it seems premature to credit him with the name of Theodore. The statement of Matthew's father, the Emperor John VI, that as late as 1357 and 1361 Matthew and Eirene had only *two sons* seems irrefutable; and those two sons are known to have been called John and Demetrios.¹⁹

*No. 80: JOHN KANTAKOUZENOS
PALAIOLOGOS*

John seems in fact to have returned to the Peloponnese before Constantine Palaiologos in 1453 (p. 197). For, as V. Laurent has pointed out, Alfonso V of Aragon wrote to him as governor of Patras on 16 July of that year.²⁰ It may further be noted that one John Palaiologos Kantakouzenos (? the same person) issued *praktika* for the monasteries of St. Paul and Vatopedi on Mount Athos as late as 1463.²¹

Page 234, *No. 1:*

V. Laurent observes that Gregory of Cyprus wrote to this John not "some time before 1291," but before he was made patriarch, i.e., before March 1282.²²

Page 237:

One further member of the Phakrases family may be added here:

No. 13: N. PHAKRASES (floruit 1422)

Mentioned as a δεφένσωρ in Thessalonica in 1422.²³

¹⁹ Kantak. iv, 45: III, p. 331, lines 14–15: ἐν ᾗ καὶ βασιλίδος τῆς Εἰρήνης ἅμα δυσὶν υἱέσι καὶ τοσαύταις θυγατράσι κύριος γενόμενος... Kantak. iv, 49: III, p. 358, lines 2–3: Ἰωάννην καὶ Δημήτριον τοὺς υἱοὺς Ματθαίου...

²⁰ Laurent, in *BZ*, 65 (1972), 99. Laurent also cites another letter of Alfonso to Constantine dated 22 August 1448.

²¹ Oikonomides, *Actes de Dionysiou*, 137.

²² Laurent, *op. cit.*, 98.

²³ S. Kugéas, "Notizbuch eines Beamten der Metropolis in Thessalonike aus dem Anfang des XV. Jahrhunderts," *BZ*, 23 (1914–19; 1920), 148, § 48.

I have left to the last the more generalized criticisms of G. I. Theodorides and of V. Laurent, since they concern the method of selection and presentation of prosopographical material rather than points of detail.²⁴

*No. 11: EIRENE KOMNENE BRANAINA
PALAIOLOGINA LASKARINE
KANTAKOUZENE*

Theodorides disputes the reason for including her in a genealogy of the Kantakouzenos family, since she was by birth only a Branaina and by marriage only a Palaiologina. Her other names she derived from her ancestors. This a valid point. But it is arguable that because Eirene bore the name of Kantakouzene she has to be included in any list of those who were entitled to that name; and I would suppose that she should also appear in any attempt at an exhaustive list of members of the houses of Komnenos and Laskaris. The evidence may one day emerge as to how she came to inherit the name of Kantakouzene, and from what ancestors.

Similarly, Theodorides objects to the inclusion of *No. 21: THEODORA PALAIOLOGINA ANGELINA KANTAKOUZENE*, the mother of the Emperor John VI. Theodora was certainly a Palaiologina Angelina, and A. Th. Papadopoulos was quite right to include her among the Palaiologi, even though his information about her parentage is wildly conjectural and about her offspring plainly inaccurate.²⁵ But it is not really proven, as Theodorides implies, that she acquired the name of Kantakouzene only through marriage to the father of John VI; and in any case, since she did in fact bear that name and was the mother of the most illustrious member of the family, she must be given her place in any account of the family.

Much the same holds good, in my opinion, for *No. 39 (THOMAS)*, who married the grandson of Eirene (*No. 11*), and for her two daughters ANNA (*No. 40*) and EIRENE (*No. 41*), since all three bore the name of

²⁴ Theodorides, in *Ἑλληνικά*, 23 (1970), 126–32.

²⁵ A. Th. Papadopoulos, *Versuch einer Genealogie der Palaiologen, 1259–1453* (Munich, 1938), no. 26, pp. 16–17.

Kantakouzene. With regard to JOHN KANTAKOUZENOS (TORNIKIOS) (*No. 44*), it is true that neither his parents nor his brothers and sisters used the name of Kantakouzenos. But the fact remains that John himself is so called in the only known source for his existence. The statement of Theocharides that John was "a grandson of a Palaiologos Tornikios (Tornikes), the *parakoimomenos* Andronikos Komnenos Doukas Palaiologos Tornikes, and a Tzamplakonissa," is only a conjecture.²⁶

EUDOKIA KANTAKOUZENE (*No. 46*) is included for the same reason, namely that, by whatever right, she (though not her brother) styled herself a Kantakouzene. Similarly, *Nos. 55* and *56*, the sisters EUGENIA KANTAKOUZENE PHILANTHROPENE and ANNA KANTAKOUZENE may very well have been Palaiologinai on their mother's side and Philanthropenai on their father's side. But if their mother really was ANNA (*No. 40*), then it was from her that Eugenia and Anna took the name of Kantakouzene. On the other hand, a special case is presented by JOHN KOMNENOS DOUKAS ANGELOS SYNADENOS (*No. 27a*). John evidently did not bear the name of Kantakouzenos (as Theocharides rightly remarks); but I included him as an extra-numerary relative of the family for the reason that he was an "uncle" of the Emperor John VI. His identification (which is still not certainly established) might therefore throw some light on the still dark problem of the immediate antecedents of that emperor.

In a work of this nature there is a lot to be said for adopting the method recommended by Professor Theocharides, to divide the members of the family concerned into three categories: I. those who took the family name from their parents; II. those who took it from their grandparents or ancestors; III. those of unknown family background. This method was employed, with admirable results, by Dr. D. I. Polemis in his study of *The Doukai*. But the family of Kantakouzenos, unlike that of Doukas whose

name survived beyond the twelfth century very largely through intermarriage with other noble families, continued to be a fairly well-defined social group in the hierarchy of the Byzantine ruling class up to and beyond the fall of Constantinople. Their members as often as not played a dominant and not a subordinate role in matrimonial alliances with other families. Nor does it follow for them, as it does for all the Doukai of the later period, that "even those whose genealogical position is totally untraceable, must belong to other families, which inherited the name through some female ancestor."²⁷ It, therefore, seemed to me preferable to list, without discrimination, every person who is known to have borne the name of Kantakouzenos, and even a few who did not but who were evidently related, in ways that may one day become clearer, to prominent members of the family. If one were to introduce a category of Kantakouzenoi "of unknown family background," the Emperor John VI would still, alas, have to be placed in it, since next to nothing is known about his father and the identification of his grandfather rests on a surmise.

The questions of method and system in Byzantine genealogy raised by Theocharides might be resolved if and when someone could establish what, if any, system was employed by late Byzantine families in the choice and arrangement of their multifarious surnames. Theocharides makes the interesting observation that "it was Byzantine custom for children to prefer the family name of their mother or her forbears to the family name of their father."²⁸ It might be a profitable exercise to apply this, or any other, principle to such a Forsythe Saga as the Lincoln College Typikon to see what results could be obtained.

The general remarks of Père Laurent will be of interest and value to all engaged in genealogical and prosopographical research. He suggests that the notes provided for each entry should be carefully distinguished under two headings: (i) references to the primary sources ("élément essentiel de cette recherche"), and (ii) references to

²⁶ Theocharides, *op. cit.*, 131. See now Gudrun Schmalzbauer, "Die Tornikioi in der Palaiologenzeit," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 18 (1969), no. 17, pp. 129-30.

²⁷ Polemis, *The Doukai*, 11.

²⁸ Theocharides, *op. cit.*, 131.

secondary and modern literature. These notes ought furthermore to be printed in smaller type and placed immediately beneath the text of each notice. This is a counsel of perfection which could raise many typographical difficulties, particularly in prosopographical notices that run to several pages; though it has recently been applied very successfully on a limited scale to the Late Byzantine branches of the family of Tornikios.²⁹ Whether or not the notices should be allowed to run to several pages is another matter; and in this connection Laurent expresses a second counsel of perfection: the information provided should be as

²⁹ Schmalzbauer, *op. cit.* I have applied the same procedure to a prosopographical note on the family of Dermokaïtes, which is to be published in *Byzantinoslavica*.

short and as clear as possible, confined to the basic facts, and therefore available for quick and easy consultation. The more familiar and celebrated a person is, the more important it is to confine the account given of him to the bare essentials. This is surely true; and in respect at least of the notices which I provided on John VI and his son Matthew, I confess to being guilty of what Laurent characterizes as want of sobriety and excess of exuberance. But where no satisfactory monograph about a person as well known as John VI had previously existed, I thought it worth while to attempt to provide something more than the basic facts of his birth, life, and death, and was thus lured away from the arid plains of prosopography into the more exuberant pastures of biography.